ABOUT GROWTH

Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development

Growth management crucial to our state's future

By Governor Chris Gregoire

We are fortunate in Washington to have one of the most effective sets of tools to manage growth in the nation – our Growth Management Act (GMA), passed in 1990 and 1991.

The leaders who put the act in place knew that Washington's quality of life was at stake. Quality is the reason many of us want to be here and it's a prime factor in Washington's competitiveness in a global economy.

We are also fortunate that the system we use to manage growth places its primary emphasis on decisions made at the local level.

The values and priorities of each community shine through in their individual blueprints for how they want to look 20 or 50 years from now. For one community it may be agriculture, for another it may be prioritizing their downtown redevelopment – but it all adds up to shared vision, tough decisions, and partnerships.

That is why I established the Governor's Smart Communities Awards, to recognize these hard-won accomplishments.

Communities large and small are doing exemplary work – from Seattle and its 37 neighborhood plans to the Town of Krupp in Grant County – the state's smallest town that is planning under the GMA. My own hometown of Auburn is transforming its downtown by taking advantage of the commuter rail station located there.

Though we most often hear about the controversies and debates, there are neighbors, farmers, business people, and public officials who are not only planning, but are also putting their plans into reality to make their communities vibrant and livable.

However, that is not all that we need. Predictability is important for the business community. Having clear plans and regulations saves time and money for people who want to make an investment in locating or expanding a business or do a small improvement on their home. This type of predictability has been key in landing major employers such as the Boeing 787 project in Everett.

The GMA deserves ongoing attention to make sure that we are always looking for ways to make it work more effectively. We were successful in making some progress this past legislative session and we will continue to work with our partners to carry on that progress.

We received 24 nominations for the 2006 Governor's Smart Communities Awards. All of the nominees demonstrated good partnerships and sound choices and they deserve our thanks and appreciation.

The field of nominees was strong and our judges were put to the test in choosing the six awards. The judges I chose are people who were influential in shaping the GMA: Joe King, Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, Busse Nutley, Nan Henricksen, and Dick Ford.

Congratulations to these cities and counties and all their partners in these exemplary projects. Their good work demonstrates that we can manage our growth and preserve our quality of life.

Awards for *Comprehensive Planning*
- City of Bainbridge Island for Winslow Tomorrow
- City of Redmond for the Redmond Comprehensive Plan

Awards for *Implementation of a Comprehensive Plan*
- City of Bremerton for Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update
- Jefferson County for Support Agriculture while Protecting Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Awards for *Project*
- King County Housing Authority and GGLO for Greenbridge Community
- City of Woodinville for Greenbrier Heights: Affordable Housing Community

Special Award
- Snohomish County for Transfer of Development Rights Program

ABOUT GROWTH

For comprehensive information about growth management:
www.cted.wa.gov/growth

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City plan reflects citizens' values

By Rob Odle
Planning and Community Development Director, City of Redmond

On a summer evening in 2003, nearly 100 people took part in a community gathering to share ideas about the City of Redmond's future. Directed by Redmond Mayor Rosemarie Ives to give free rein to their imaginations, a group with a mix of ages, backgrounds, and perspectives provided an enthusiastic launch to Redmond's major comprehensive plan update.

The values held most dear by community members as articulated by the group are:

- Conserve agricultural lands, rural areas, and the natural environment.
- Retain and enhance Redmond's distinctive character and high quality of life.
- Emphasize choices in housing, transportation, stores, and services.
- Support vibrant concentrations of places to live, work, shop, and recreate in the Downtown and Overlake, Redmond's two urban centers.
- Provide a business climate that retains and attracts locally owned companies, as well as internationally recognized corporations.
- Promote a variety of community gathering places and diverse cultural opportunities.
- Provide convenient, safe, and environmentally friendly transportation connections within Redmond, and between Redmond and other communities.
- Remain a community of good neighbors, working together and with others to implement a common vision.

Within two years after this workshop, Redmond completed updates to every element of its comprehensive plan based on these values. Highlights are described below:

Character: Redmond added a Community Character and Historic Preservation Element as part of a strategy to retain distinctive elements of the community's character. To carry out these policies, the city adopted regulations for protection of historic buildings, created a Landmarks and Heritage Commission, formed a grant program, established historic street and interpretive signage, and published a walking tour brochure.

Choices: Redmond citizens value having a community in which people of a wide range of incomes, ages, or needs can live. They value having opportunities for residents to remain in their neighborhood through changes in age or family size. Four of seven residential neighborhoods in the city support cottage housing at densities up to twice the underlying zone. They also support requiring a portion of new housing to be affordable to households earning 80 percent or less than the King County median. To further the plan's housing goals, an Innovative Housing Program allows demonstration projects to help identify new forms of housing that can fit within neighborhoods. Citizens also emphasize the need for practical alternatives for traveling within Redmond and between Redmond and the region. To support this goal, the city adopted a Transportation Master Plan with a clear strategy for providing real mobility choices.

Achieving A Common Vision: Redmond's updated policies provide support for an implementation and community indicators program. The program, which the city council established in 2005, identifies actions needed to carry out the comprehensive plan, as well as measures to assist in evaluating progress toward achieving community goals on which the plan is based. The first report was published in July 2006 and a one-page summary pamphlet, emphasizing key findings, was distributed to about 500 interested parties. It is available in public places such as city hall and from the Web.

Redmond is a special place, and the comprehensive plan is the city's blueprint for advancing the community's goals, recognizing the need to work together for the things citizens value today as well as 20 years in the future. The GMA provides critical tools to help achieve Redmond's desired future.

Judges' comments

"Good community input." "Really like outreach and innovation in housing." "Especially good example of incorporating a Housing Element into a comprehensive plan for the community."

Zoning code quickly revised to match new plan

GMA-responsive plan and zoning revisions are drawing new office, retail, and residential development to downtown Bremerton.

PHOTO / CITY OF BREMERTON

By Chris Hugo
Former Planning Director, City of Bremerton

In 2001 Bremerton's community and economic development had lain stagnant for 25 years. Its 1995 GMA-compliant comprehensive plan set out lofty growth targets and quality-of-life expectations but provided little direction on how to achieve either. The zoning code bore little resemblance to the Land Use Element of the plan.

Just six years after the adoption of the city's first GMA plan, a new one was in order.

In 2004 Bremerton adopted an entirely new plan with a centers-based growth strategy as its foundation. The plan directs all multifamily development to centers and two transportation corridors. All neighborhood and community-serving commercial areas that are not in centers are "frozen" at their current boundaries.

Low-density residential is the "background" land use in all neighborhoods, and the density range is five to ten units per acre. More than half the 20-year projected residential growth within the existing city limits will occur in centers, including the Downtown Regional Center.

Less than a year after the plan's adoption, the city council enacted a new zoning code. Most zone classifications and all standards are new and consistent with the more urban focus of the plan.

All noncenter, multifamily zoned properties are changed to the R-10, single-family zone. Vacant commercial sites that are outside designated centers and the frozen, single-purpose commercial districts, for example, Freeway Commercial, are also rezoned to R-10.

The Planned Unit Development option is abandoned in favor of Clustered Residential Development. Development in centers is guided by subarea plans, and the plans include full regulatory detail to function as the zoning and infrastructure standards. A new Master Development Zone classification links subarea plans to the zoning code and map.

The new low-density minimum lot size is 4,350 square feet and, near centers, 3,000 square feet. The maximum lot size is 8,712 square feet. No density standards are set for centers – the number of allowed units is a product of the zone's bulk envelope and required parking.

New dimensional standards reflect the plan's direction to increase urban efficiencies, enhance neighborhood safety and society, create attractive pedestrian environments, and increase the visual quality of streetscapes. Build-to lines are established for most commercial environments, including arterial corridors. Site coverage is increased and setbacks are decreased. Street standards are consistent with a multimodal travel environment with emphasis on enhancing the pedestrian environment. In the most recent plats, the cross-section standard for a residential street is reduced from 36 feet to 26 feet and, in some situations, the allowed width is as narrow as 18 feet.

The new plan also anticipates that design guidelines will precede mixed-use and higher density development in centers, and this expectation is addressed through the subarea planning process as well. The first set of guidelines was adopted six months after enactment of the new zoning code.

The market response to these highly GMA-responsive plan and zoning revisions is dramatic. In the downtown, three waterfront condominium projects will open in early 2007 and 150,000 square feet of new office or retail space is occupied with another 50,000 square feet building under construction. More condos, two hotels, and retail are in the planning stage.

In neighborhoods surrounding downtown, in-fill town-home and condo developments sell out during the construction phase. Even more significant is the reemergence of platting that was almost nonexistent for decades. The city has approved more than 1,300 lots to date, and 2007 could see as many as 2,000 more.

As one of the Governor's 2006 Smart Communities Award winners, Bremerton demonstrates both the hope and potential of deliberate growth management planning.

Judges' comments:

"The city moved to put code in place to support the plan on a fast track." "Simplifying the code worked." "The speed with which they matched code to plans is amazing – need more of this."

Redeveloped housing project offers walkable streets, open space, and community services

By Jeff Foster
Principal, GGLO

The King County Housing Authority through a HOPE VI grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is revitalizing Park Lake Homes, a 100-acre public housing development in White Center. The authority selected GGLO as the prime consultant for the master planning and design of the revitalized community.

The primary goal of the project is to replace existing World War II era housing with a mix of housing types to create a neighborhood with youth and social services at its heart and connections to open space, off-site amenities, and neighborhood shopping. The design process required translation into six languages to address the needs of the different cultures and the generational groups within those cultures.

The redevelopment of Park Lake into Greenbridge incorporates sustainable design practices throughout the project. King County committed to these practices through a Demonstration Ordinance that allows variances to the land use and building codes. The ordinance allows the design team to establish a street system that works for the vehicles, but dramatically improves the relationship with pedestrians and bicyclists.

Attention is paid throughout the site design to defensible spaces. Open spaces aren't isolated by the street pattern, but allow for passive surveillance and access by emergency vehicles. The number and width of roads are reduced to minimize impervious surface area, and key existing street alignments and existing stands of trees are preserved.

Careful phasing of the work allows more than half of the existing residents to remain on the site during redevelopment, supporting the new elementary school and continuing use the renovated community facilities. The new school and play fields complement the renovation

The Greenbridge neighborhood offers well-designed homes near parks and stores.

PHOTO CREDIT / GGLO

of the existing Community Center. New mixed-use buildings will house other community uses, including a library, community college facilities, a Head Start school, neighborhood and social services, and other commercial uses.

A variety of housing choices and building types will replace the 569 single-story residential units. The mix of rental and home-ownership housing will respond to market fluctuations over the course of development with at least 300 units of public rental housing for very low-income residents.

Walkability is a goal for the project, so new and improved pedestrian paths and trails are placed to establish a variety of routes for residents to walk 10 minutes to the center of the new community and link to the neighboring urban village of White Center.

A range of open spaces across the site includes community, neighborhood, and

pocket parks, with trails and linear parks connecting them. The community park will act as a primary gathering space, while four neighborhood parks will offer green open spaces for active and passive play. An emphasis on discovering art around the site becomes an integral part of the pedestrian experience.

As a winner of the Governor's Smart Communities Award, Greenbridge offers an example of how a walkable neighborhood can be created offering design features and amenities that will attract residents.

Judges' comments:

"Great redevelopment project integrating many of the aspects of growth management planning, notably transportation and housing, into a project that has substantial benefit to the community."

Greenbrier Heights – The whole is greater than the sum of the parts

By Arthur Sullivan
Program Manager, A Regional Housing Coalition

Greenbrier Heights in Woodinville is a successful example of a collaborative public-private effort aimed at meeting regional and city affordable housing goals.

Greenbrier Heights was developed through a partnership of non- and for-profit developers – DASH, CamWest, and Shelter Resources – and government agencies working together to transform a King County surplus site into a residential neighborhood affordable to a wide range of incomes.

The development, with 170 homes, consists of a mix of single-family and cottage ownership homes, senior and family rental apartments, community facilities, a central neighborhood park, and ten acres of protected forest and wetlands. Affordability ranges from rental homes for families and seniors as low as $400 per month, and single-family homes and cottages from $118,000 to $230,000.

Innovation through integration is probably the best way to sum up Greenbrier. This integration is accomplished in a number of ways:

- Integrating public input from the beginning of the process by the city and county to build community support for the project.
- Integrating environmental preservation into development opportunities. Almost half the site was preserved in its natural setting, which did not undermine efforts to include affordable housing because the city's development regulations allow partial density transfer for the preserved areas, and regulations for single-family zones allow attached housing outright in order to preserve open space.
- Integrating housing for many types of households with a wide range of income levels. Greenbrier includes rental housing for senior and family households earning 30 percent and 50 percent of median income, and ownership housing for households earning 80 percent to 120 percent of median income. Ownership units range from one- and two- bedroom cottages to three- and four-bedroom detached homes, and family rental units range from one- to four-bedroom, with a number of three- and four-bedroom townhomes. City regulations allow a density bonus of up to 50 percent for providing affordable housing.
- Integrating the objectives and needs of public agencies and private developers to create a site plan that meets community objectives (e.g., neighborhood park and city parks programs in the community building) and the needs of the development community (e.g., permit narrower streets to accommodate the detached ownership housing).
- Integrating the design of the various residential components to create a cohesive neighborhood.
- Integrating public and private funding, including the state Housing Trust Fund, Housing Finance Commission, King County Housing Fund, and four cities through A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH). The City of Woodinville also waived permit fees for all the affordable housing and provided some funding for the community building. Through the ARCH Housing Trust Fund, cities share their resources in order to fund the best opportunities to provide affordable housing in East King County.

Through this cooperative effort Greenbrier Heights has become a neighborhood affordable to all income levels that has been embraced by its residents and the broader community. It is the recipient of the Governor's Smart Communities Award and a Puget Sound Regional Council 2020 award.

The Greenbrier Heights project is the result of a public-private partnership that meets local and regional affordable housing goals.

Photo / ARCH

Judges' comments:

"Clear that affordable housing served as well as open space and community amenities." "Housing stock enhanced at affordable level."

Winslow Tomorrow: One part process, one part planning

By Darlene Kordonowy
Mayor, City of Bainbridge Island

Adopted by the city council on November 16, 2005, the *Downtown Winslow Urban Design Plan* for the City of Bainbridge Island exemplifies innovative comprehensive planning.

Planning for Winslow Tomorrow was initiated in the summer of 2004 to provide guidance on capital projects in downtown Bainbridge Island. When the community was invited to participate, 125 people stepped forward and all were welcomed.

The Community Congress was a lively and diverse group, some new to the island, some second- and third-generation. Initially the prevailing sentiment was, "We don't want Winslow to change… and if it must, then make it like it was!" For 14 months, the congress worked diligently to achieve consensus on a vision to ensure preservation of Bainbridge Island's character, quality of life, and ecosystems, while invigorating economic vitality.

The recommendations and plan encourage the gradual evolution of Winslow from an aging 1950s retail corridor to a compact, mixed-use town center. Islanders seek to sustain and revitalize Winslow as the island's center of commerce, culture, and community: a real downtown that will serve the everyday needs of people who live on the island and those who visit.

Winslow Tomorrow supports the city's growth management strategy of building more compactly in Winslow, thereby conserving land and protecting critical areas outside of downtown. By locating growth in downtown Winslow, where services and infrastructure are available, we can use land more efficiently on the whole island, preserving critical areas, forests, working landscapes, and rural character. We'll require less investment in streets and utilities, consume less land and energy, and have less impact on water resources, ecosystems, and traffic.

Winslow Tomorrow envisions more people living in a pedestrian friendly downtown, with more public amenities, an improved multimodal transportation system emphasizing nonmotorized options, and new and expanded businesses offering new services and employment opportunities.

Policy changes will provide incentives for property owners and the development community to contribute toward building a town that is consistent with community values, encourages efficient land use, and reduces auto-dependency and off-island trips.

The plan anticipates public investment of $60 million to $100 million over the next 15 to 20 years. Private investment is expected to exceed $192 million and generate more than $9 million in tax revenue over the first ten years of the project.
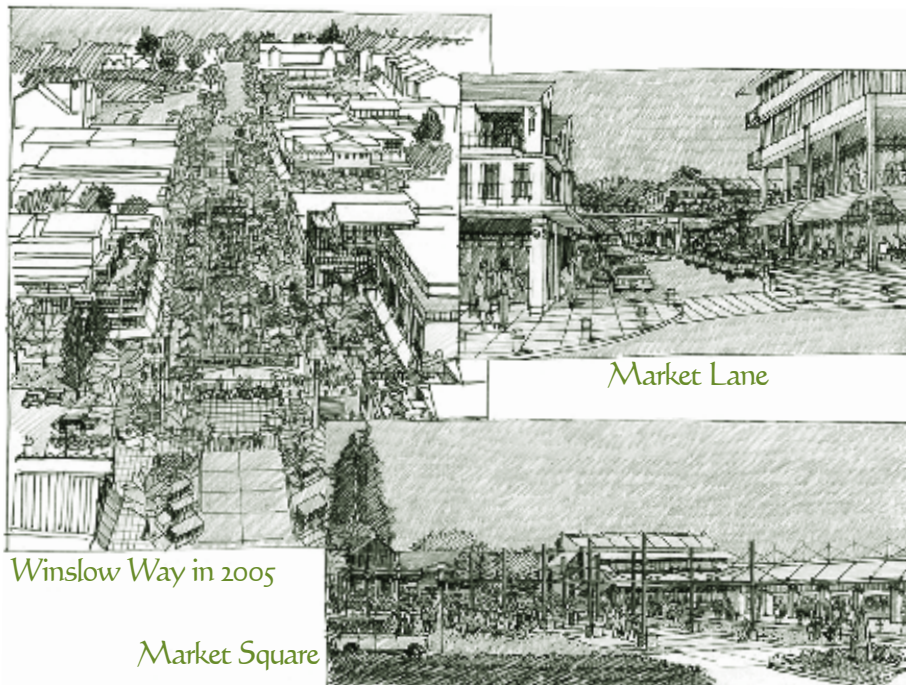
Winslow Tomorrow forged new partnerships between the city and the community, inviting planners, property owners, business interests, and citizens to join in a new, more respectful, and open way of working together. The Community Congress serves as a model for communities seeking to engage citizens in a meaningful, productive planning process.

Winslow Tomorrow brought together four essentials:

- A project leader who was given permission to lead without predetermined outcomes.

- A diverse group of constituents, supported by trained facilitators.

- A format that encouraged the development of information, ideas, relationships, and understanding. It offered opportunities to listen, learn, and contribute.

- The resources to make the work meaningful and productive.

Winslow Way in 2005

Market Lane

Market Square

The citizens of Bainbridge Island want a compact, mixed-use town center at Winslow.

PHOTO / CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

Judges' comments:

"GMA well applied with balance of issues, density, transportation, aesthetics, jobs, revenue." "Excellent example of citizen participation in a comprehensive plan."

County program supports agricultural and protects environment

By Brent Butler
Associate Planner, Jefferson County
Department of Community Development

Agriculture and environmental protection are important to citizens and elected officials in Jefferson County. When an environmental organization filed a growth management petition challenging an agriculture exemption from stream and wetland buffers, the county's first response was to propose a narrow definition of qualifying "existing and ongoing agriculture." When farmers protested, the county launched an effort to engage multiple parties in updating and carrying out comprehensive agricultural lands policies.

The policies include:

- Implementing a 2002 settlement agreement with the Washington Environmental Council by limiting the agriculture exemption in a way that was also acceptable to farmers and by working with the conservation district and local farmers to draft an Agriculture, Fish, and Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan for the Chimacum Creek Basin.

- Amending the comprehensive plan in 2003 and 2004 to simplify the Agricultural Lands designations and to include an additional 220 parcels as Agricultural Lands of Local Importance.

- Adopting in 2004 a new set of development regulations for agricultural activities and accessory uses to agriculture that utilized GMA amendments made that year.

The multiyear planning effort involved the Board of County Commissioners, county staff, the planning commission, local farmers, interested residents, state officials, environmental groups, the conservation district, and Washington State University Extension. The result is county policies and regulations related to agriculture that were supportive of local farming, while also effectively protecting fish and wildlife habitat adjacent to agricultural activities.

Jefferson County was "ahead of the curve" when it supported the creation of the Chimacum Watershed Agriculture, Fish, and Wildlife Protection Plan, said Josh Peters, AICP, senior planner for the county. The plan is a model that lists best management practices to be voluntarily implemented and monitored in order to prevent and mitigate environmental impacts on fish and wildlife habitat. It is an important part of the county's agricultural-environmental strategies.

Local momentum reached a crescendo when the Board of County Commissioners

Small-scale agriculture and accessory uses, such as this greenhouse, can be built in Jefferson County under the new agricultural policies.

Photo / Christina Pivarnik

allowed for accessory uses – such as produce stands, product processing, and agritourism – on designated Agriculture Lands, and redesignated numerous parcels countywide from Rural Residential to Local Agriculture, said Peters. Adopted through ordinance just days after Washington enacted authorizing legislation, Jefferson County possibly has moved further along than any area in the state by establishing regulations that support business opportunities on local farms in a way that respects rural character, he added.

Similarly, the county has taken an innovative approach to habitat protection and existing and ongoing agriculture by documenting the successful return of a

species of salmon and summer chum, and by monitoring Chimacum Creek water quality to continually check whether voluntary measures in lieu of standard stream and wetland buffers are working in the Chimacum valley, Peters said.

Judges' comments:

"Worked with all stakeholders for a workable solution – not an easy task." "Preserves a key economic aspect of the county, enhances fish and wildlife with ecological and economic values, preserves open space." "Should be used by other counties."

Program aims to maintain agricultural land

By Millie Judge
Assistant Chief Civil Deputy,
Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office

The Snohomish County Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program is designed to conserve the long-term viability of commercial agriculture within the county, while creating development incentives to achieve planned densities under the GMA within urban growth areas. This innovative program was created through collaborative partnerships between Snohomish County, the City of Arlington, the agricultural community, and development industry within the county.

In 2002 the county and the City of Arlington began working with farmers and developers to determine the practicability of developing a TDR program. A feasibility assessment and study were prepared.

The TDR program required several legislative enactments: (1) a comprehensive plan amendment creating the sending area, (2) the

development regulation creating the specifics of the program, and (3) the development regulation creating the local implementation methodology. Each piece had its own public participation requirements.

The county council's goals for the TDR program are:

- Based on a free-market approach.
- Simple to understand and administer.
- Compliant with GMA goals.
- Attractive to and administered by the cities after the initial phases.

Judges' comments

"If successfully implemented, provides a direct, tangible connection between three important goals of the Growth management Act – conservation of natural resource lands, encouraging new growth in urban areas, and reducing sprawl."

Judges applaud additional Smart Communities Awards nominees

Twenty-six applications were received for the Governor's Smart Communities awards. Impressed with the quality of the plans and projects submitted, the judges called them "innovative and forward-looking."

Here are comments from the judges about all the remaining nominations:

City of Auburn – Downtown Revitalization: "Emphasis on reuse of existing buildings for housing, businesses, and public services fits well with the small business assistance program and transit orientation toward a revitalized downtown."

City of Bellevue – Development Services Improvements: "Provides a 'one-touch' permit process that should result in timeliness and predictability for homeowners and developers."

City of Bellevue – Realizing the Residential Vision in Downtown Bellevue: "Demonstrates comprehensive look at focusing both housing and job growth in a downtown center."

City of Kent – Kent Station: "Every town needs a center – and this will be a 'strong' center."

City of Liberty Lake – Comprehensive Plan: "The plan's outreach in the communities – and plain speak – is excellent."

City of Liberty Lake – Implementation of a Comprehensive Plan: "The strong link between regulations and plan should result in the plan vision being achieved."

City of Mount Vernon – Healthy Communities Project: "GMA focuses on healthy communities, but this program made it direct and understandable. It should be a great tool for others."

City of Mukilteo – Harbour Point Master Planned Community: "Very good mix of uses… urban village center provides for transit friendly community."

City of Redmond – Redmond Riverwalk Implementation: "Public has taken the project to heart and promotion at civic events is innovative."

City of SeaTac – Cedarbrook Project: "The public loves it – what more can be said."

City of Seattle – The Nihonmachi Green Street Revitalization: "Protects the character of the area, improves mobility, and connections to public transportation which serves residents."

Moses Lake – Healthy Communities Project: "Used a variety of implementation tools to support the vision and physical improvements made to allow for lifestyle change."

Pacific County – Seaview Dunes Preservation Project: "Citizen driven effort to save the dunes on the coast with resulting environmental and open space benefits."

Pierce County – Biodiversity Planning and Pilot Biodiversity Management Area (BMA) Project

(Gig Harbor Peninsula – Crescent Valley BMA): "The stakeholders and landowners involvement is an outstanding result."

Seattle Housing Authority – Livable Communities: From Vision to Reality Transforming Seattle's Low-income Communities: "Density, open space, affordable housing are clear 'examples' of GMA goals being met."

Tacoma Housing Authority —Development Project to Implement a Plan: "Blends good community design, preservation of open space, and affordable housing with an excellent, multicultural public outreach program."

Whatcom County – Critical Areas Ordinance Update: "Public outreach and involvement was outstanding. TRUST built."

Program aims to maintain agricultural land

Snohomish County is establishing the TDR program in phases. The initial phase consists of (1) creating the sending area on floodplain farmland in the Arlington vicinity and (2) offering the opportunity for farmland owners to sell their development rights and record a conservation easement on the land. The sending area is in the Stillaguamish River Valley located between I-5 and the City of Arlington.

When development rights are sold, the value is identified in a TDR Certificate issued by the county. The certificate may be used for development of lands inside the urban growth area in targeted locations, the receiving area.

The value of the development right is determined by the local jurisdiction, typically the city, with regulatory control over the receiving area land where the TDR Certificate may be used.

As part of the program's second phase, the county established the first receiving area within Arlington's urban growth area. The county and city are developing an interlocal agreement to govern the minimum development parameters that must be met for the use of certificates within the receiving area to ensure that the TDR Program goals are met.

The county comprehensive plan and its implementing measures seek to conserve about 60,000 acres of agricultural lands. The TDR program will help direct new growth away from farmlands and toward urbanizing areas where urban services are both appropriate and efficiently provided.

"We want to ensure that the wholesome values and economic benefits of our farming heritage live on for our children and grandchildren to enjoy," said County Executive Aaron Reardon.